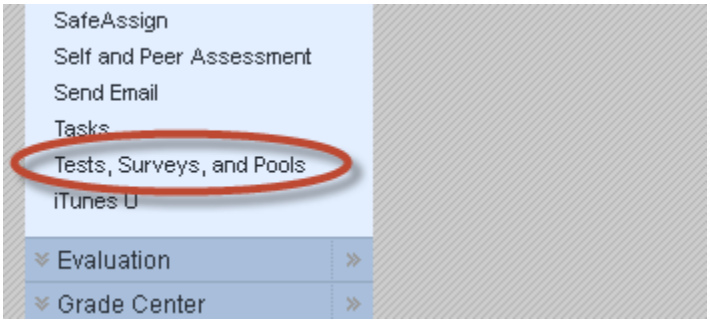
How to create random blocks for Tests in Blackboard

The Blackboard Test Random Block tool can be used to create tests that give students different questions in a test. The more questions in a random block, the greater the probability different students will get different questions. To ensure fairness to every student, the questions in a random block should be at the same difficulty level and about the same concept.

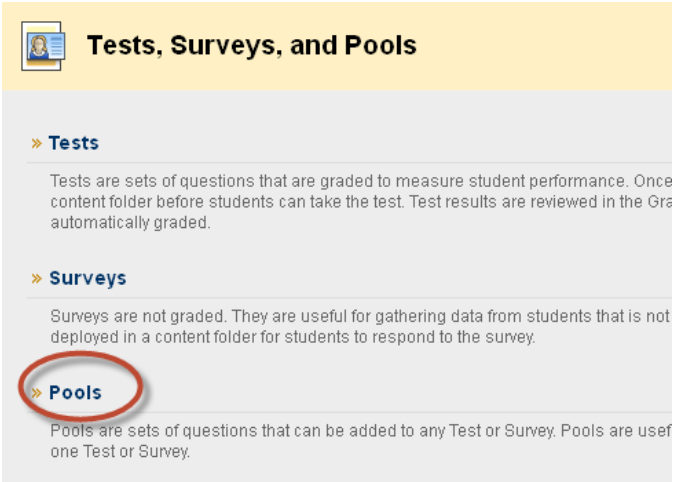
Before creating a test that includes random blocks, you need to create random blocks in the Pools.

1. Click Course Tools under the course control panel.

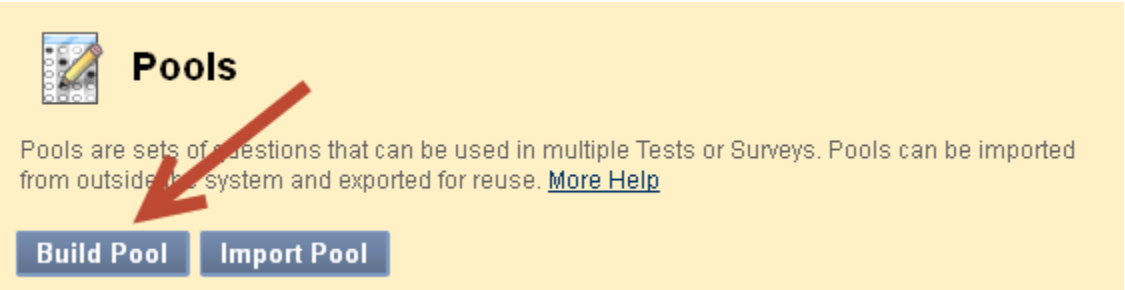
2. Click Tests, Surveys and Pools.



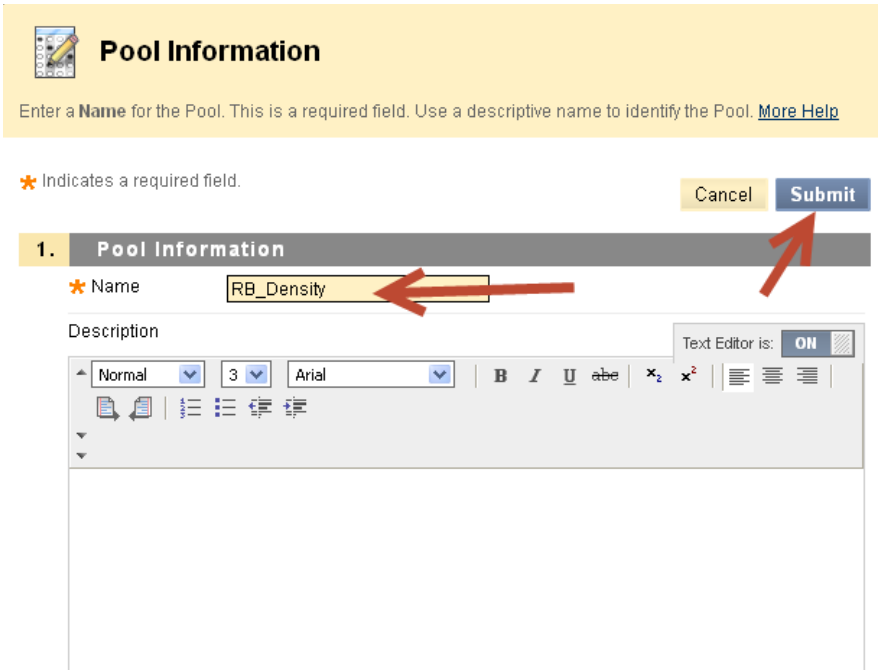
3. Click Pools.



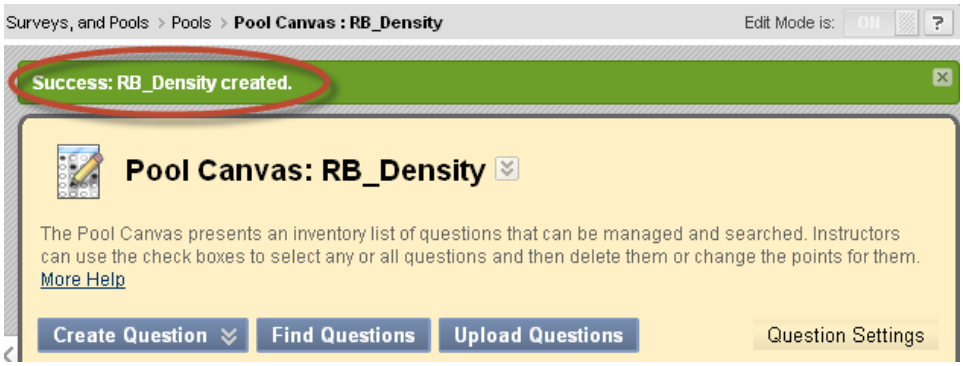
4. Click “Build Pool”.



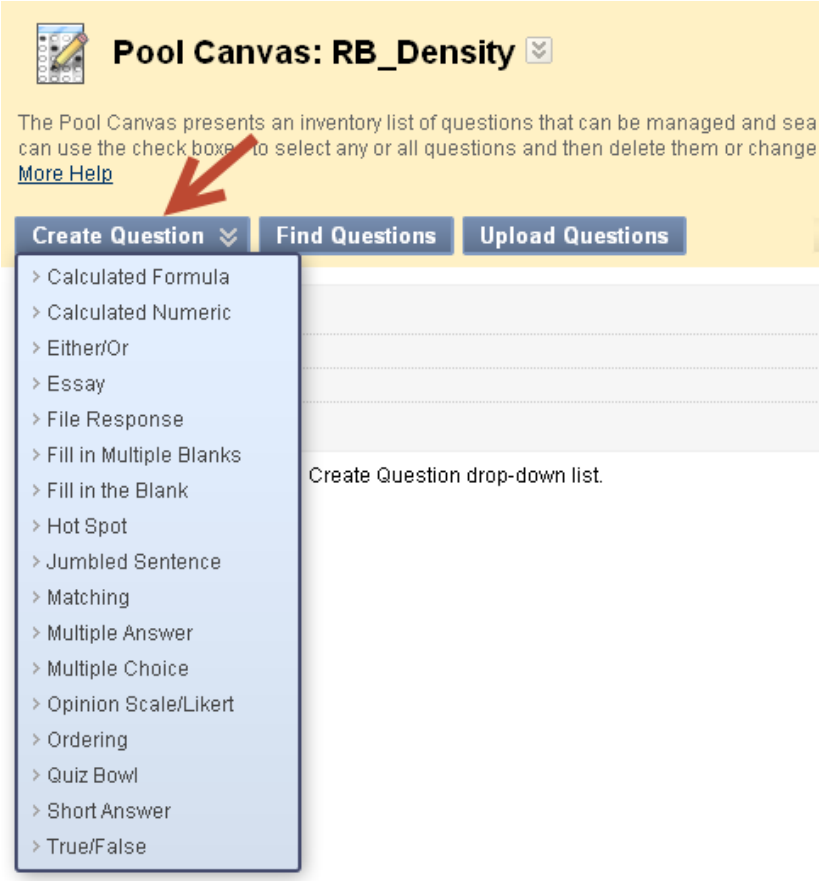
5. Give a meaningful name to the Pool. For example, if this is a random block for test questions related to density calculation, you can call it “RB_Density” (RB here means random block). Then click Submit.



6. You will receive a message saying the random block is created. You can now add questions to this random block.



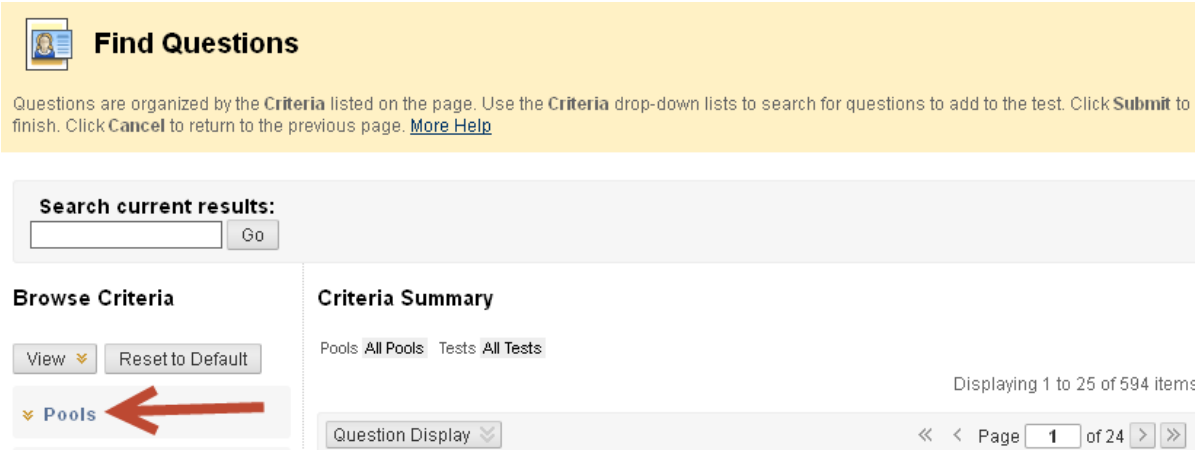
7. You can add questions one-by-one by clicking “Create Question” button and choose a question type. For example, “Fill in the Blank”, “Multiple Choice”. After adding all questions, go to step 17. If you want to use questions from a test bank provided by your textbook publisher that is loaded in the Pool, continue with step 8.



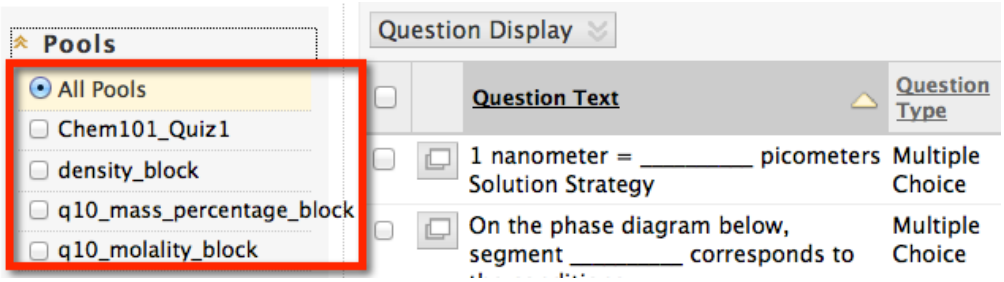
Create Question drop-down list.

8. You can click “Find Questions” to select questions from a test bank or pre-created tests in the Pool.

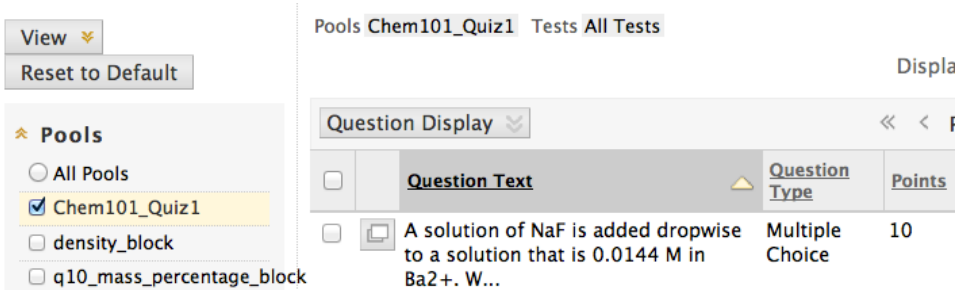
9. A pop-up window “Find Questions” will appear. Click Pools on this window.



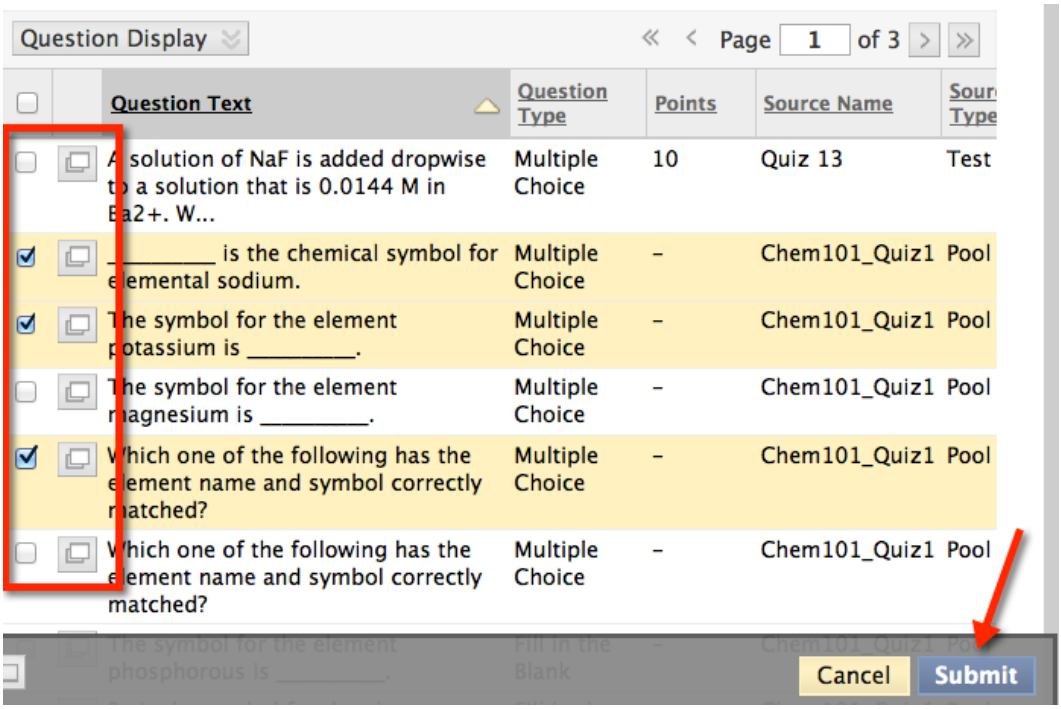
10. By default “All Pools” radio button is selected.



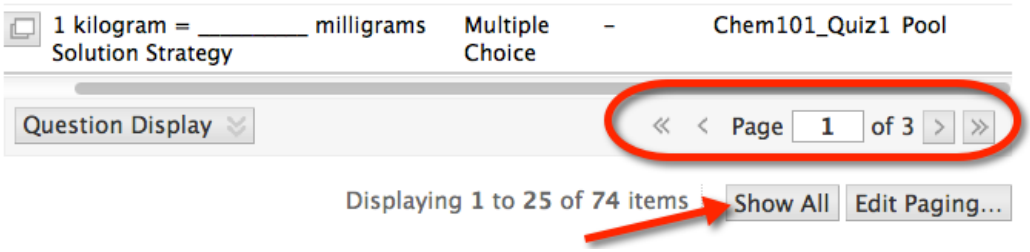
11. You can choose one chapter or a test or multiple chapters or tests by clicking on the checkboxes for the chapter(s) or test(s). Questions from the chapter(s) or test(s) will be displayed.



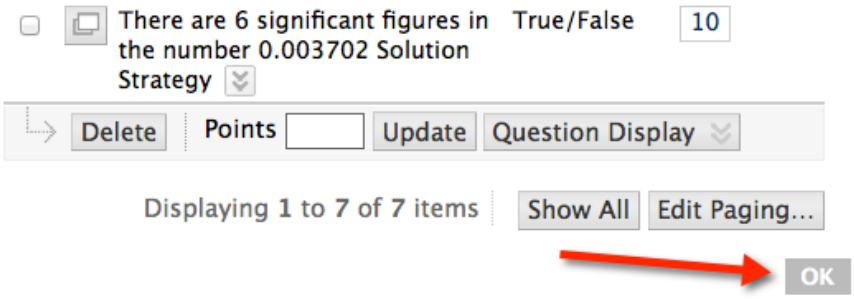
12. Select the questions that you want to include in the random block by clicking the checkboxes on the left. If there are too many questions, you can narrow down by key word search. Type a key word in the textbox under “Search current results” on the top left and then click “Go”. After selecting proper questions, click Submit at the bottom.



13. If the questions are displayed on multiple pages, you can click the arrow to go to the next page or type in the page number in the box and press Return/Enter key. After selecting all questions for this random block, click Submit. Alternately, you can click "Show All" to display all questions in one page and then select from them.



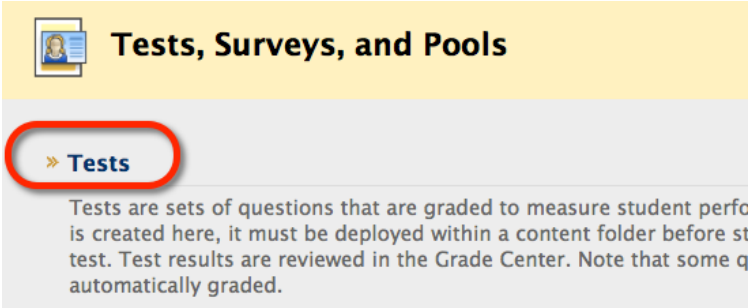
14. If you still want to add more questions to this random block from other chapters or tests, repeat steps 8 - 13.
15. After adding all questions to this random block, click "OK" at the bottom right.



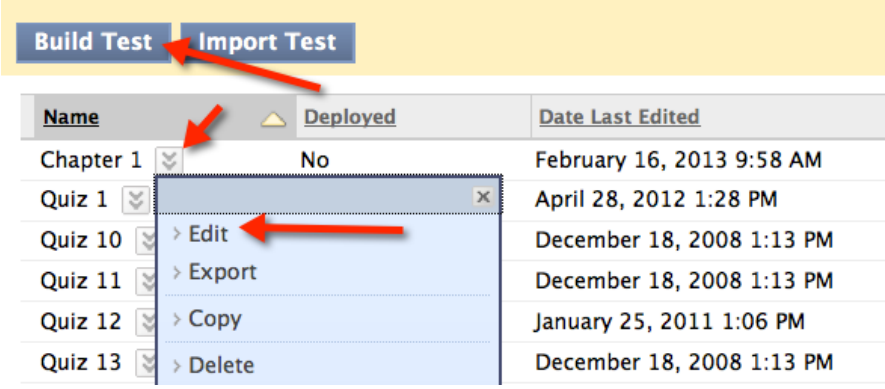
16. Now a random block is created. You can repeat steps 4 – 15 to create more random blocks related to other concepts or skills.

Next you can create a Test that includes random blocks.

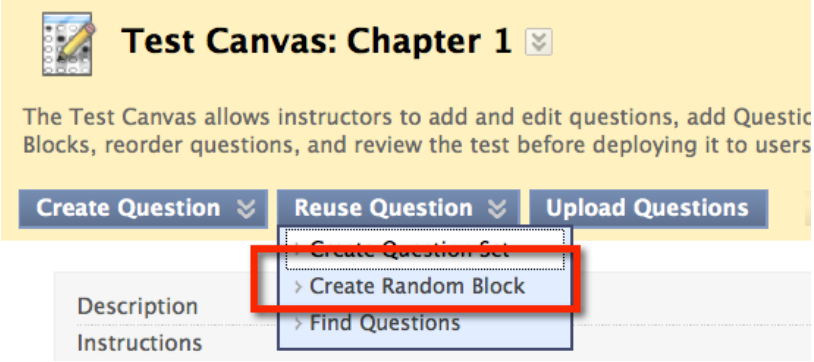
17. Click Tests on the “Tests, Surveys and Pools” page.



18. Click “Build Test” to create a new test, or click the contextual button (the two down arrows) next to the test where you want to add random blocks and click “Edit”.

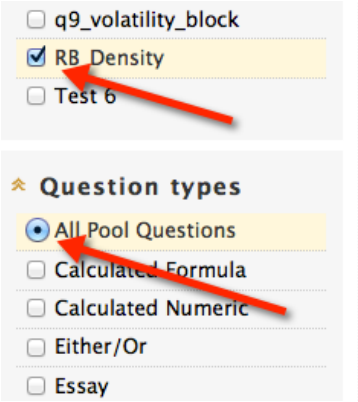


19. On your test canvas click “Reuse Questions” then “Create Random Block”. Please note: if you do not first create random blocks in the Pool but directly get into here to “Create Random Block”, You will have to add all questions in a chapter or multiple chapters in a test bank to this random block. It doesn’t provide options for you to choose questions. This is the reason why you need to do the previous steps to create custom random blocks.

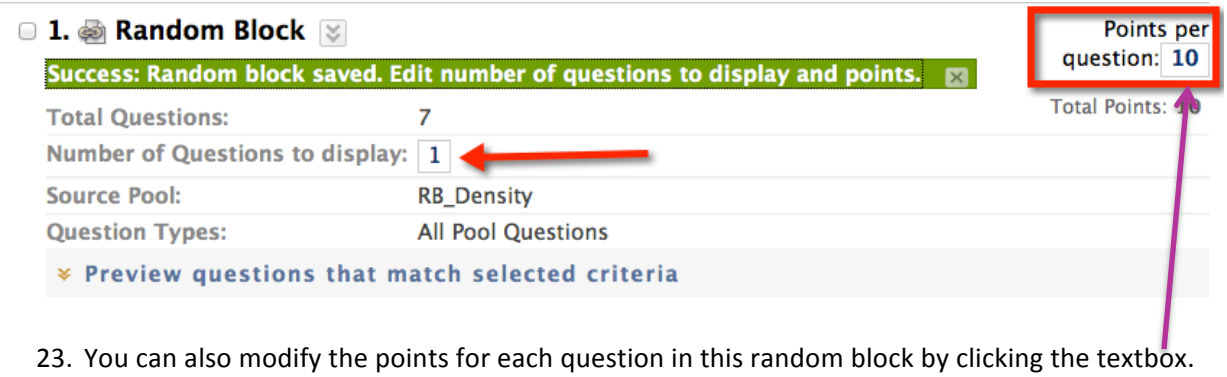


20. A pop-up window “Create Random Block” is displayed.

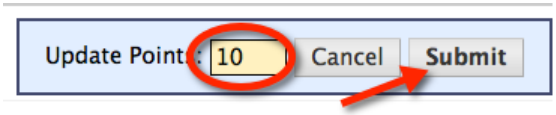
21. Under “Choose Criteria” check the checkbox in front of the random block you want to add. Under “Question Type” click “All Pool Questions” or check the checkboxes for the questions types you want to select. Then click “Submit”.



22. Now a random block is added to your test. You can choose the number of questions to display each time a student takes this test. In this example it is 1. You can click the box and type in a different number for your test.



23. You can also modify the points for each question in this random block by clicking the textbox. Then type in the points and click Submit.



24. Repeat steps 19 – 23 to add more random blocks to this test. Then you have a test ready for deployment. Once it is deployed, your students will get different questions for the same concepts and at similar difficulty levels.